

Public Document Pack



Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community Policy and Performance Board

Monday, 19 June 2023 at 6.30 p.m.
Boardroom - Municipal Building, Widnes

S. Young

Chief Executive

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Councillor Eddie Jones (Chair)	Labour
Councillor Angela Teeling (Vice-Chair)	Labour
Councillor Angela Ball	Labour
Councillor Emma Garner	Labour
Councillor Stan Hill	Labour
Councillor Noel Hutchinson	Labour
Councillor Carol Plumpton Walsh	Labour
Councillor Christopher Rowe	Liberal Democrats
Councillor Mike Ryan	Labour
Councillor Tom Stretch	Labour
Councillor Andrea Wall	Labour

*Please contact Ann Jones on 0151 511 8276 or e-mail
ann.jones@halton.gov.uk for further information.
The next meeting of the Board is on Monday, 18 September 2023*

**ITEMS TO BE DEALT WITH
IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Part I

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	Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Other Disclosable Interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda, no later than when that item is reached or as soon as the interest becomes apparent and, with Disclosable Pecuniary interests, to leave the meeting during any discussion or voting on the item.	
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In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act the Council is required to notify those attending meetings of the fire evacuation

procedures. A copy has previously been circulated to Members and instructions are located in all rooms within the Civic block.

EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING AND SKILLS, AND COMMUNITY POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community Policy and Performance Board on Monday, 30 January 2023 in the Boardroom - Municipal Building, Widnes

Present: Councillors Jones (Chair), E. Cargill (Vice-Chair), Begg, Dourley, Garner, Logan, Rowe, Stretch and Skinner

Apologies for Absence: Councillor S. Hill and C. Plumpton Walsh

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: W. Rourke, A. Jones, S. Bartlett, L. Carr and S. Lowrie

Also in attendance: R. Owen – Halton Chamber of Commerce

**ITEMS DEALT WITH
UNDER DUTIES
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

	<i>Action</i>
<p>ELS18 MINUTES</p> <p>The Minutes from the meeting held on 21 November 2023 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p>	
<p>ELS19 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME</p> <p>It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.</p>	
<p>ELS20 UPDATE ON EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING AND SKILLS, AND COMMUNITY POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD - BUSINESS SUPPORT SCRUTINY TOPICS</p> <p>The Board received a report from the Operational Director – Economy, Enterprise and Property, which gave an update on the 'Provision of Business Support' Scrutiny Topic Group.</p> <p>Further to the last meeting's update, this report provided commentary on the emerging issues and key considerations relating to the LCR Growth Platform following a presentation to the Board from its Managing Director; and the emerging issues following a study visit by the scrutiny</p>	

group to *Carpenter Additive*, on Dennis Road, Widnes.

Members welcomed the update and agreed that the Topic Group be concluded.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) notes and received the update on the Topic Group; and
- 2) agrees that the Provision of Business Support Topic Group is now concluded.

ELS21 SPORT AND RECREATION TEAM

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director for Community and Greenspace, on the Council's Sport and Recreation Service.

It was reported that the Sport and Recreation Team has two distinct areas – Sports Development Team and the Leisure Centre Team. The report included information on the service delivery for both Teams from June 2022 to December 2022. It was noted that service delivery had been extremely difficult as recruitment delays affected staff, regular customers and engagement with residents. Further, the cost of living crisis was now affecting the service as some people were cutting back on how much they spent on leisure.

An update on the building programme of the new Leisure Centre on Moor Lane, Widnes, was also given; a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) had been prepared and were appended to the report for information. It was reported that the Contractor, *Wates*, was having meaningful dialogue with the Council, such as attending HEP meetings and visiting colleges, and were committed to a strong and comprehensive programme of social value activities in Halton. The Contractor would also be providing the Council with a monthly report on social value.

The following information was provided following Members' questions on the Service:

- The staffing structure of the Leisure Centres was explained – one Leisure Centre Manager manages the two Leisure Centres and directs two Senior Operations Managers (one assigned to each site). They ensured that service standards and operational standards were achieved and also managed six

Operation Managers, who took care of the day to day operations of the buildings and staff;

- All Operation Managers' posts were filled with internal promotions;
- The pay rates for Leisure Attendants were comparable with other providers;
- Recruitment for Leisure Attendants was ongoing – the majority recruited in November 2022 have started after a long process, with the main delay being pre-employment identity checks for those under 18;
- The Council has recognised this as an issue and offers support in obtaining identification where possible for young people;
- Three part time Leisure Attendant vacant posts would be advertised in February;
- The Swim Team was carrying a number of vacancies including the Manager's post – as a result the swimming lessons waiting list remains suspended;
- Free places for swim qualifications were currently being advertised – it was hoped that workforce plans being taken forward will lead to appointments and the learn to swim programme can be expanded;
- Swimming Instructor pay rates were lower than private providers, however, there were benefits the Council offered not matched by private employers such as pension, sick pay and training;
- Shortages of staff within the leisure business was a regional problem, being experienced by neighbouring authorities; and
- Some courses were being funded by donations from Police and social landlords.

RESOLVED: That the report and comments made be noted.

ELS22 LIVERPOOL CITY REGION LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SKILLS PLAN

The Board received a report of the Operational Director – Economy, Enterprise and Property, which provided an update on the development of a Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) for the Liverpool City Region (LCR). Members welcomed Rachel Owen, from the Halton Chamber of Commerce, who delivered an accompanying presentation.

It was reported that the White Paper *The Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth* introduced a plan to put employers more firmly at the heart of the skills system to help ensure businesses and people

had the skills they needed to thrive and progress. The LSIPs were a key part of achieving this aim.

The LSIP was led by a designated Employer Representative Body (ERB); St Helen's Chamber of Commerce was designated for the LCR and would liaise with the other Chambers within the LCR. The LSIPs would set out employers' skills needs and the priority changes required in a local area to help ensure post-16 technical education and skills provision was more responsive and flexible in meeting local labour market skills needs. The report and presentation set out how this would be done and provided some guidance in respect of the LSIPs.

In response to Members questions and comments the following information was provided:

- TUC involvement was being done at a national level with DWP. St Helen's Chamber was the ERB for Halton as part of the LCR, so they could be contacted for more information about this;
- The responses to the questionnaire from Halton businesses was welcomed – there was no particular profile of companies that had responded so far; they were a mix of large, medium and small enterprises;
- Members were invited to provide details of companies in Halton they were aware of to the Chamber, for them to make contact with them;
- Although the top three sectors identified in Halton with skills gaps were manufacturing, construction, and logistics and warehousing, there was scope to include the environmental sector, for example companies such as Innovyn and Alstom (who had responded to the research);
- Construction was a very large area so a broad view of this was being taken, to include as many companies and trades as possible;
- Apprenticeships were included in the plan and focus groups would identify the skills gaps within apprenticeships as well;
- Focus groups would also identify the needs of the Borough as a whole;
- The ERB for the area was appointed by the Department for Education, after a tender process had taken place;
- Halton Chamber was working with the Colleges in Halton to identify gaps in skills provision, which was fed to Government. Any funding as a result of this went directly to the College (or other provider of education); and

- It was noted that additional specialist teachers / lecturers would also be needed to plug the gaps identified by the research and to deliver the education.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) Members note the process and progress being made to develop a Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) for the Liverpool City Region; and
- 2) the Council works with Halton Chamber of Commerce to raise awareness of the Research Questionnaire contained in Appendix one of the report; additionally the Chamber maximises existing strategies and research held by the Council's Business Support Team.

ELS23 DEPARTMENT OF WORK AND PENSIONS RESTART CONTRACT UPDATE

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director – Economy, Enterprise and Property, which provided an overview of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Restart Programme contract, currently being delivered by Halton People into Jobs (HPIJ).

It was reported that in June 2021 Halton Borough Council entered into a subcontracting arrangement with Prime Contractor (G4S) who had been tasked with delivering the DWP's new Restart Programme.

The programme is mandatory for individuals that had been unemployed and in receipt of benefits for 9 months or more. It was noted that indicative start profiles estimated that 1992 Halton residents would be supported through the programme. The programme offered 'Payment by Results' which were received on achievement of sustained job outcomes; the definition of this was explained.

The report outlined for Members the performance and achievements of the programme from June 2021 to December 2022 and listed the Customer Service Standards (CSS) that were also used to measure job starts and sustained job outcomes.

Following the presentation of the update, the following additional information was noted after questions:

- There have been two recruitment freezes by HBC

which has affected the performance of the Team, leading to financial penalties for not being fully staffed. The Team was put on a Performance Improvement Plan by G4S due to this shortage of staff, resulting in underperformance – concerns were raised over the future of the contract if this was not resolved;

- DWP referrals were lower lately which has been a national issue as well as a local issue;
- Some clients referred did refuse to enter the Programme for various reasons which presented challenges for the Team;
- Clients also received training where necessary and help towards public transport costs; and
- Some clients entering the Programme had succeeded in gaining maths, English and IT qualifications, as well as some specific job qualifications.

The Board welcomed the report and praised the HPIJ Team on their successes with the Restart Programme.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

In order to complete the presentation of the following item, a motion to move Standing Order number 50 was made, seconded and agreed by the Board.

ELS24 SUPPORTED INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME (WORK-BASED STUDY PROGRAMME)

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director – Economy, Enterprise and Property, which provided an overview of the Supported Internship (SI) Programme contract currently being delivered by Halton Borough Council's (HBC) Employment Learning and Skills Division (delivered jointly by Halton People into Jobs and Halton Adult Learning).

It was reported that in April 2021 HBC were commissioned to deliver the SI Programme which was a structured, work based study programme for young people aged 16-24 with Special Educational Needs/Disabilities (SEND) and who had an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). The programme was initially contracted to deliver 10 Supported Internships in year one.

The report provided details of the SI Programme, which included its aims, its four key principles, how the Programme was delivered and achievements to date.

The role of the 'Job Coach' was explained to Members as being someone responsible for working with the Interns to identify suitable placements for them to complete. They continued to support them during the placement until the Intern and the employer were satisfied that they could undertake the role independently. The role of the Job Coach also included educating the employer, for example with the needs of the Intern and health and safety matters. Travel training was also carried out by the Job Coach to help the Intern to get to their education setting and/or employers premises. This was carried out until the Intern and their family/carer was satisfied that they could undertake their travel safely and independently.

The Board discussed the issues faced by the Programme from the recruitment prioritisation process in place since the Programme went live in September 2021. This has prevented recruitment of sufficiently qualified and experienced front line staff in the Employment, Learning and Skills Division; to deliver the Programme within the required timescales is seen as a lower corporate priority. Temporary agency staff had been used where possible, but there has still been an impact on Interns being able to receive the full Programme offer this year. Members felt that this was an important service area and where possible, recruitment to posts should be accelerated.

To update, since the publication of the report, it was announced that the total number of supported internships now moved into paid work was six, an increase of two (paragraph 3.2.2) and some now worked for the Council. It was noted that feedback on the Programme received from the Interns and their families so far was positive.

The Board thanked both Teams for their work in delivering the Supported Internship Programme so far.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

Meeting ended at 9.07 p.m.

REPORT TO: Employment, Learning, Skills and Community Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 19 June 2023

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director – Legal & Democratic Services

SUBJECT: Public Question Time

WARD(s): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider any questions submitted by the Public in accordance with Standing Order 34(9).
- 1.2 Details of any questions received will be circulated at the meeting.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That any questions received be dealt with.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Standing Order 34(9) states that Public Questions shall be dealt with as follows:-

- (i) A total of 30 minutes will be allocated for dealing with questions from members of the public who are residents of the Borough, to ask questions at meetings of the Policy and Performance Boards.
- (ii) Members of the public can ask questions on any matter relating to the agenda.
- (iii) Members of the public can ask questions. Written notice of questions must be given by 4.00 pm on the working day prior to the date of the meeting to the Committee Services Manager. At any one meeting no person/organisation may submit more than one question.
- (iv) One supplementary question (relating to the original question) may be asked by the questioner, which may or may not be answered at the meeting.
- (v) The Chair or proper officer may reject a question if it:-
 - Is not about a matter for which the local authority has a responsibility or which affects the Borough;
 - Is defamatory, frivolous, offensive, abusive or racist;

- Is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the past six months; or
 - Requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.
- (vi) In the interests of natural justice, public questions cannot relate to a planning or licensing application or to any matter which is not dealt with in the public part of a meeting.
- (vii) The Chair will ask for people to indicate that they wish to ask a question.
- (viii) **PLEASE NOTE** that the maximum amount of time each questioner will be allowed is 3 minutes.
- (ix) If you do not receive a response at the meeting, a Council Officer will ask for your name and address and make sure that you receive a written response.

Please bear in mind that public question time lasts for a maximum of 30 minutes. To help in making the most of this opportunity to speak:-

- Please keep your questions as concise as possible.
- Please do not repeat or make statements on earlier questions as this reduces the time available for other issues to be raised.
- Please note public question time is not intended for debate – issues raised will be responded to either at the meeting or in writing at a later date.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 **Children and Young People in Halton** - none.

6.2 **Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton** - none.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton** – none.

6.4 **A Safer Halton** – none.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal** – none.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

8.1 There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO: Employment, Learning, Skills and Community Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 19th June 2023

REPORTING OFFICER: Executive Director, Environment and Regeneration

PORTFOLIO: Employment, Learning & Skills & Community

SUBJECT: Employment, Learning, Skills and Community Policy and Performance Board Annual Report for 2021/22.

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE AND CONTENT OF REPORT

1.1 To receive the Employment, Learning and Skills and Community Policy and Performance Board's Annual Report for 2022/23.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the 2022/23 Annual Report be recommended to Full Council.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Article 6 of the Constitution requires each Policy and Performance Board to submit an Annual Report to Council outlining their work, making recommendations for future work programmes and amended working methods as appropriate.

3.2 The Annual Report (see attached) has been submitted to the Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community Policy and Performance Board for consideration.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 No further implications

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

None

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

There are no equality or diversity issues.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no direct climate change implications as part of this report.

10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

10.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE EMPLOYMENT LEARNING, SKILLS & COMMUNITY POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD JUNE 2022 – MARCH 2023

Introduction from Councillor Eddie Jones Chair of the Employment Learning, Skills & Community Policy & Performance Board

The Board scrutinises the work of the *Economy, Enterprise & Property Department* and the *Community & Environment Department*.

My thanks to the officers for working with the Vice-Chair and I to develop the agenda items and thank you for the quality of the reports and presentations they have produced during the year. We have certainly had a varied and informative agenda and I believe that Members of this board continue to proactively shape the services we provide to our residents and I would like to thank Members of the Board for their passion and commitment.

I hope that the Board will continue to make a worthwhile contribution to creating an economically prosperous borough in this challenging environment.

THE BOARD'S MEMBERSHIP

During 2022/23, the Board's membership comprised Councillor Eddie Jones (Chair) Councillor Ellen Cargill (Vice-Chair); Councillor Victoria Begg; Councillor Eddie Dourley; Councillor Garner Councillor Stan Hill; Councillor Geoffrey Logan; Councillor Carol Plumpton Walsh; Councillor Chris Rowe; Councillor Tom Stretch; Councillor Aimee Teeling.

The Board had 3 meetings during the year.

THE ROLE OF THE BOARD

The Council's constitution sets out the Board's strategic priority is to develop policy and scrutinise performance in relation to the Council's objectives. Specifically in relation to 4 areas:

- Enterprise and employment
- Adult learning and skills
- Culture and leisure services
- Library Service

SCRUTINY TOPIC GROUPS

Members of the Board completed two scrutiny topics.

'Health and Employment' and 'The Provision of Business Support in the Borough'.

The Health and Employment topic group sessions included contributions from officers within the Employment, Learning and Skills (ELS) Division, as well as Public Health. Members were advised that the Employment Learning and Skills Division and Health

services contribute to improving the mental health of adults who live and or work in Halton. Services work collaboratively to raise awareness in the work force and in communities to the support available.

Health issues are an important component of the support local residents receive from the Council's Halton People into Jobs Team with employment programmes signposting to MIND as well as health trainer links. The Adult Learning team within the ELS division has signed up to a mental health pledge, although it is worth noting that no dedicated learner support exists.

When considering the provision of business support in the borough, Members participated in the following sessions:

1. an introduction to the Topic Group (Background and Context)
2. a presentation from the Council's Inward Investment officer, who provided Case Study examples demonstrating where business support has been effective.
3. a presentation from The Chief Executive of the Chamber of Commerce outlining how the Chamber supports business in the borough
4. a presentation from the Managing Director of the Liverpool City Region Growth Platform (21st November)
5. a study visit to Carpenter Additive, Dennis Road Widnes (19th December).

APPRENTICESHIP SUPPORT

The Board received a report and presentation on the '*Apprenticeship Support by Be More*' service. The Apprenticeship Support by Be More Team was managed by Halton Borough Council and funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Strategic Investment Fund (SIF). It delivered career inspiration and guidance to Liverpool City Region (LCR) residents and promoted the take up of apprenticeships, vocational training and employment vacancies.

SPORTS AND RECREATION

The Board received a report which provided information on the Council's Sport and Recreation Service, and Leisure Centre and Sports Development Services for the financial year 2021/22. The report outlined what the service had delivered during the last 12 months, following the emergence from the pandemic. The Leisure Centre Service (LCS) reopened in April 2021 after the third national lockdown. It was reported that the service continued to actively work with partner organisations, to facilitate development through a better understanding of local issues and a sharing of resources to achieve success.

At a subsequent meeting the Operational Director for Communities and Greenspace provided an update on recent restructures within his department.

EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS IN THE LIVERPOOL CITY REGION

The Board regularly received updates on employment and skills developments in the Liverpool City Region (LCR). The LCR Combined Authority led on a number of employment and skills initiatives as follows: Adult Education Budget (AEB) Procurement; LCR Skills Show; Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs) and Strategic Development Fund (SDF); and Skills Bootcamps for the Workforce.

UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND

The Board was provided with updates on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and set out how this may impact on Halton. Members were advised that the UKSPF was a major regeneration fund. Reports outlined the funding commitments already made which included what the UKSPF would provide to the Combined Authority as a whole and what Halton would receive from this. It also provided information on the impact this funding would have for Halton and its priorities.

CHANGES TO LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIPS (LEPS)

The Board considered a report which provided an update on transition from a Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and Growth Platform, to a more integrated organisation as part of the Liverpool City Region (LCR) Combined Authority, against a backdrop of a Central Government review.

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION GROWTH PLATFORM

The Board received a presentation from Mark Basnett, the Managing Director of the Liverpool City Region (LCR) Growth Platform, informing of the role and work of his organisation.

SCI-TECH DARESBUY TALENT AND SKILLS ACTION PLAN

The Board considered a report which provided an update on the delivery of Sci-Tech Daresbury's Talent and Skills Action Plan.

The Business Growth Director for Sci-Tech Daresbury, gave a presentation to Members on the Talent and Skills Action Plan.

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION LOCAL IMPROVEMENT SKILLS PLAN

The Board received a report which provided an update on the development of a Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) for the Liverpool City Region (LCR). Members welcomed Rachel Owen, from the Halton Chamber of Commerce, who delivered an accompanying presentation.

**DEPARTMENT OF WORK AND PENSIONS RESTART
CONTRACT UPDATE**

The Board considered a report which provided an overview of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Restart Programme contract, currently being delivered by Halton People into Jobs (HPIJ).

**SUPPORTED INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME (WORKBASED
STUDY PROGRAMME)**

The Board considered a report which provided an overview of the Supported Internship (SI) Programme contract currently being delivered by Halton Borough Council's (HBC) Employment Learning and Skills Division (delivered jointly by Halton People into Jobs and Halton Adult Learning).

PERFORMANCE REPORTING

At each meeting the Board receive this report that informs them of emerging issues and the performance of the divisions in meeting Key Performance Indicators. The latter emerge from the annual business plan which in turn is derived from a longer-term Council level plan.

REPORT TO:	Employment, Learning, Skills & Community Policy & Performance Board
DATE:	June 19 th 2023
REPORTING OFFICER:	Corporate Director, Chief Executives Delivery Unit
PORTFOLIO:	Leader
SUBJECT:	The Big Conversation Update
WARD(S)	Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To share with the Employment, Learning, Skills & Community Policy & Performance Board the approach to 'The Big Conversation', which is integral to formulating a new Council Corporate Plan, to take effect from April 2024.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) that the Employment, Learning, Skills & Community Policy and Performance Board endorses the approach to facilitate 'The Big Conversation'.

3.1 Background

It was agreed at Management Team on February 21st 2023 and at Executive Board on March 16th 2023 that we would provide adequate opportunity for meaningful consultation and ultimately produce a Corporate Plan which is totally unique and meaningful to the people of Halton.

- 3.2 This would take the form of 'The Big Conversation' and would incorporate the opportunity for all to feedback via hard copy form, electronically or face to face, between now and the end of the year.

3.3 The Big Conversation: Reimagine Halton - we don't have all the answers!

'The Big Conversation' is all about engaging with the public so that they understand the challenges that the Council is facing.

It is an approach between the Council and everyone who lives or works in Halton to work together in order to create an improved borough in all aspects of everyday life.

3.4 Corporate Plan Survey Themes:

- Effective support for all those in need
- A strong and vibrant economy bringing prosperity to all
- Strong, safe and happy communities that can shape their future
- A Cleaner and greener environment
- Active, healthy and longer lives for all

3.5 Survey Questions:

- What do you think of the 5 themes?
- What can you do to help us to achieve these?
- What can the Council do to achieve these?
- Are there any other themes that you think are missing?
- Ideally, how do you want to access Council services?
- Any other comments?

Targeted engagement of different audiences, for example, Children and Young People: What would make Halton a better place for you to play, live and grow up?

3.6 Data Analysis

All feedback and responses will be scrutinised and evaluated. The 2 facilitators from North West Employers (used in December 2022) will then be invited back to meet with members from both Management Team and Executive Board in order to work through this, summarise accordingly and establish a number of key objectives, which in turn will form the organisation`s new Corporate Plan.

3.7 Revised Timescales:

- January – March 2023: Update Management Team/Executive Board and also communicate with the wider audience, namely Divisional Manager`s and all elected members
- May – December 2023: The Big Conversation takes place
- May – June 2023: consult HBC Workforce
- December 2023 – January 2024: analyse data and identify the key learning points/issues
- January – March 2024: compose the Corporate Plan and seek approval
- April 2024: the New Corporate Plan is launched

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no specific policy implications at this stage; however ultimately there will be a new contemporary and relevant Halton Borough Council

Corporate Plan.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There is a potential financial implication around the resources required for the delivery of 'The Big Conversation' and the evaluation of the data and qualitative content that it results in.

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

- 6.1 The Corporate Plan is Halton Borough Council's key strategic document. This plan sets out the main vision, themes and values of the Council.

'The Big Conversation' will help to determine the Council's new set of priorities, which will be translated into the plan.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

- 7.1 The major risk is that we do nothing and roll out the same priorities as we have done in previous years. To this end the current Corporate Plan is a losing relevance and doesn't fully engage with either the workforce or the people of Halton in the contemporary environment.

- 7.2 The Council is serious about 'Reimaging Halton' aligned with that commitment, this is a perfect opportunity to undertake a meaningful piece of work which will engage the people of Halton and together with our workforce determine a set of new priorities, which will make a difference and take Halton forward over the next 3 – 5 years.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

- 8.1 Equality and Diversity may well be a specific Corporate Plan priority, but if not then it will certainly underpin the Plan. An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken as part of the policy development process.

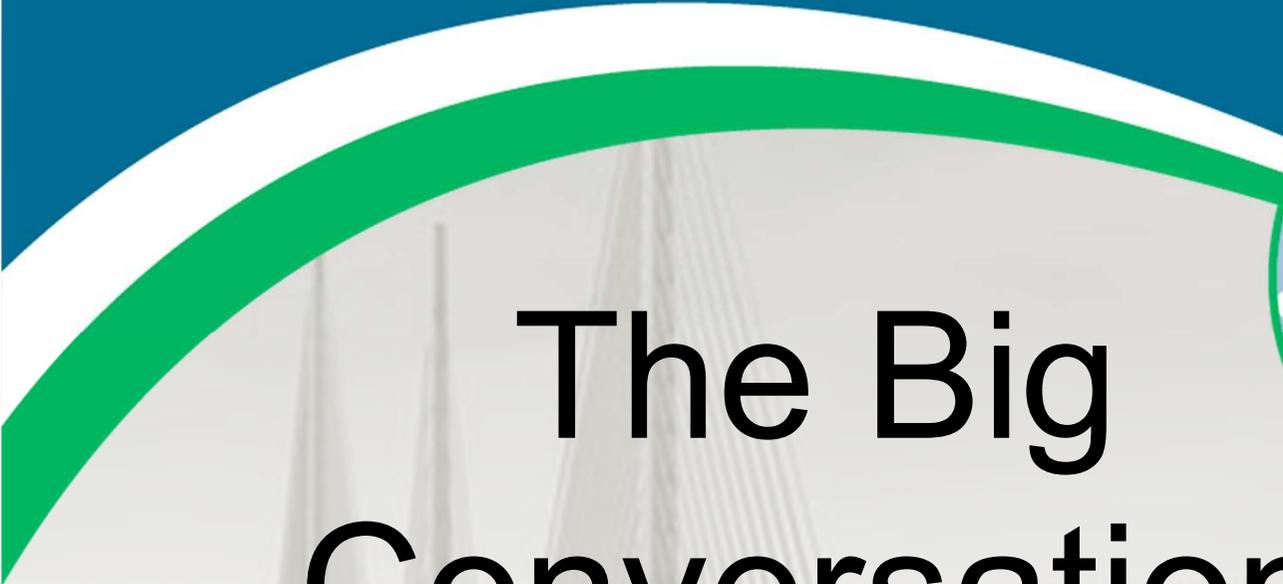
9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 At this stage there is nothing specific to highlight within the context of this report; however there is a distinct possibility that as a result of 'The Big Conversation' climate implications will form one, or a key part of one, of the Council's key priorities.

10.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

None under the meaning of the Act.

Appendix A: The Big Conversation PowerPoint Presentation



**The Big
Conversation
update....**



Background

The Big Conversation is all about engaging with the public so that they understand the challenges that the Council is facing.

It is an approach between the Council and those who live or work in Halton to work together in order to create an improved borough in all aspects of everyday life.

It also links to 'Reimagine Halton' which will see the Council looking in detail at what we do, how we do it and why we do it – and whether taking a different approach could be more efficient, productive or deliver a better outcome.

www.halton.gov.uk



Consultation

* Different consultation approaches will be utilised dependent on the audience – consultation tools will range from an on-line questionnaire, to iwalkers, along with attendance in person at various forums and meetings. These will also be available offline via libraries, community centres, one stop shops, etc.

* In the first instance we`ll be sending out an on-line survey.

* It is important that we provide some framing to the questions we are asking in order to manage expectations.

Consultation

- Background to the Big Conversation – creation of a web page, a user friendly place to hold some of the background information in terms of key data, statutory and discretionary responsibilities.

List of Stakeholders:

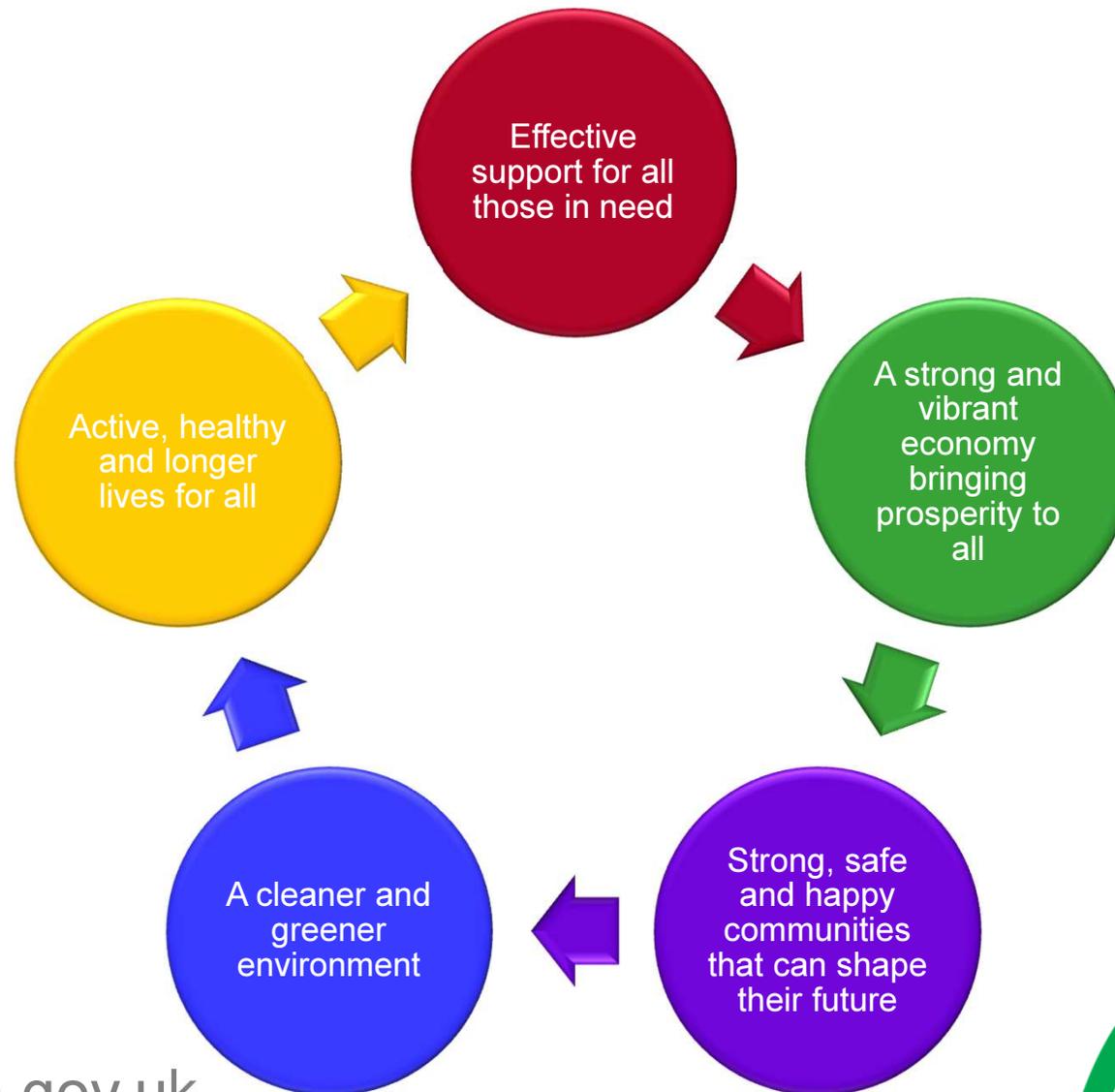
Public/customers, HBC Workforce, Elected Members, Partners, Voluntary Sector, Community Sector, Independent Sector, Businesses, Schools (Heads), Hard to Reach Groups – eg. children and young people/refugees/asylum seekers/travellers/disabled people/people with mental health/minority ethnic groups

Local Authority 'Corporate Plan' suggested themes

In order that the survey doesn't consist of a 'blank sheet' or a 'wish list', highlighting generic themes provides a starting point leading to more meaningful comments and discussion.

These were established via evidence based data from within the Council, along with an in-depth trawl of numerous existing Local Authority Corporate Plans across the country.

'Corporate Plan' Survey Themes



www.halton.gov.uk



The Survey Questions:

- What do you think of the 5 themes?
- What can you do to help us to achieve these?
- What can the Council do to achieve these?
- Are there any other themes that you think are missing?
- Ideally, how do you want to access Council services?
- Any other comments?

Targeted engagement of different audiences, eg. Children and Young People: What would make Halton a better place for you to play, live and grow up?

Publicity & Promotion

- Initially targeting HBC staff (two thirds reside within the Borough – will help to spread the word)
- Inside Halton magazine (June edition)
- Members Briefings & attendance at PPB`s
- iWalkers
- Stickers on Council vehicles eg. Bin lorries
- Constant monitoring throughout

Revised Timescales

- January – March 2023: Update Management Team/Executive Board and also communicate with the wider audience, namely Divisional Manager`s and all elected members
- May – December 2023: The Big Conversation takes place
- May – June 2023: consult HBC Workforce
- December 2023 – January 2024: analyse data and identify the key learning points/issues
- January – March 2024: compose the Corporate Plan and seek approval
- April 2024: the New Corporate Plan is launched

REPORT TO:	Employment Learning and Skills and Community
DATE:	19 th June 2023
REPORTING OFFICER:	Executive Director Environment & Regeneration
PORTFOLIO:	Employment Learning and Skills and Community
SUBJECT:	Presentation Halton & St Helens Voluntary Action
WARD(S)	Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To receive a presentation from the Chief Executive Halton and St. Helens Voluntary Action.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That:

- i) That the board notes the presentation and action points.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Members will receive an update from the organisation's Chief Executive on the organisation's strategic priorities.
- 3.2 It is anticipated that the presentation will cover several areas of interest, i.e. training, development and capacity building and support to local groups.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no further policy implications.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial implications.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 The work of Halton and St. Helens. VA complements a wide range of the Council's priorities, and is an important and supportive strategic partner in contributing to the borough's economic regeneration and growth agenda.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 There are no risks identified.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 There are no equality and diversity issues directly related to the presentation.

9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no climate change implications.

10.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

10.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO:	Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	19 June 2023
REPORTING OFFICER:	Executive Director – Environment and Regeneration
PORTFOLIO:	Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community
SUBJECT:	Library Strategy 2023-2028
WARD(S)	Borough-wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide members with a report on the Council's draft Library Strategy for 2023-2028 and to update members on the good work which has taken place in 2022/23.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That**

- i) The draft Library Strategy is taken to Executive Board for adoption.**

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The current Library Strategy expires in 2023. The new Library Strategy attached to the report has been produced in house by the libraries team and all the library staff have been given the opportunity to comment and input. It provides useful information for the customer on what the library service offers and sets objectives for the next 5 years, to improve the service and ensure it moves forward and widens the customer base. The Strategy will be published on websites and will be available within the libraries.
- 3.2 Copies of the draft Library Strategy will be available at the meeting for members to consider. Once members have considered the draft strategy, the aim would be to take it to Executive Board for adoption.
- 3.3 Below are figures for the Library Services for 22/23. Going forward we will be able to present these figures as a comparison from one year to another, to show any increases for the services.

Widnes & Ditton	Total attendance figures
Rhyme time – Widnes & Ditton	2047
Saturday Stories	813
Lego Club – Widnes & Ditton	1311
Science Club - Widnes	177
Class visits – Widnes & Ditton	1818
Warm welcome winter coffee mornings (Stay Warm, Stay Well)	124
Public PC's usage- Widnes & Ditton	9,099
Halton Lea & Runcorn	Total attendance figures
Rhyme time – Halton lea & Runcorn	3, 611
Saturday Stories	1,097
Lego Club - Halton lea & Runcorn	1257
Halton Home Education monthly meet up	271
Class visits - Halton lea & Runcorn	2,191
Public Pc's usage- Halton lea & Runcorn	17,193
Warm welcome winter coffee mornings (Stay Warm, Stay Well)	202
New Service offers launched and one off feature events :	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brilliant Builds! • A Good Yarn • Scrabble Club • You Can Do I.T! • Family History monthly helpdesk • Additional Lego Clubs • Home Ed monthly meet up • Monthly Coding Clubs in partnership with Mako Create and Daresbury Tech • Plus 1000 visitors to MakeFest at Widnes Library in March • Over 2,500 people attended our one off and school holiday events across sites.

Social media	Total site visits
Facebook views	198,037
Twitter site views	125,666
Library website	50,328
Outreach Services	
Home Library Service	109 customers 10,152 books delivered
Deposit Collections in 6 sites	840 books supplied
Reading Groups	5 internal groups / 5 external / 900 books supplied
Memory Box Delivery	Supplied monthly to 12 care homes 144 memory boxes delivered
Adult Outreach events	302 people reached at 24 events
Library User Statistics	
Active borrowers (KOHA)	15,585
Active borrowers (BORROWBOX)	9,070
Active users (PRESSREADER)	24,562
Book issues (all 4 sites)	203,595
Ebook issues (BORROWBOX)	15,571
Eaudiobook issues (BORROWBOX)	21,163
Articles read (PRESSREADER)	1,313,385
People visiting HBC Libraries (All 4 sites)	320,600

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The Library Service is a statutory service and supports the Council's priorities.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no financial implications.

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

The current programme provides ample opportunity for children and young people to engage with the library offer, in person and online. Rhyme Time, science and Lego clubs, along with school visits and much more. The staff try and make the library inviting to all ages and have designated areas for children and young people.

6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

The library provides a valuable learning opportunity for customers of all ages, the loan of up to 20 free books, online magazines and newspapers, computers and a warm friendly welcoming environment. The Work Club which ran pre-Covid, has moved online and is now targeted at particular housing estates. However, the IT Club and library staff will help customers to get online to complete job applications and assist with the scanning and printing of documents, which customers need for job applications.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

The varied library offer is across all four libraries and online, providing flexibility to customers. The libraries act as a social gathering place and can help reduce loneliness. Stay Warm Stay Well was a national campaign which we participated in and one that we will look to roll out during winter 2023, as this was a valuable service during the energy crisis. We also promote bring a picnic, so customers can come into the libraries and stay for longer. The libraries have quiet spaces for work or reading and free Wi-Fi and PC access. Reading Well is a National campaign which promotes a list of books on topical health issues such as anxiety, depression etc, which users can borrow as self-help guides. There is a Reading Well list for adults and one aimed at teenagers.

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

Halton Lea Library opening times now reflect Shopping City opening times, which means it is now safer for staff and customers to visit the library.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

The Old Town Library is part of the key flagship project within the Reconnecting Runcorn programme, promoting a cultural hub offer.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 The risks are associated with the failure to deliver the objectives over the next 5 years. We have been ambitious, yet realistic at designing the objectives and feel confident we can deliver them as set out.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 The Libraries are open and fully accessible. New Changing Places facilities are being installed as part of the Brindley extension and at Halton Lea Library.

9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no direct climate change implications as part of this report.

10.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

10.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

Halton Libraries

LIBRARIES STRATEGY

2023 - 2028



www.halton.gov.uk/libraries



Halton Libraries Strategy – 2023/2028

Introduction

Halton Libraries' aim is to provide an energetic, diverse service with an inclusive offer across all of our communities. This strategy provides a framework for the future of the service, so that Halton Libraries can continue to meet the needs of local communities and support the aims and objectives of the Council.

Background

Halton Library Service is delivered through four public libraries and as an outreach service across the Borough, this includes the Community Library Service our bespoke offer to care and residential homes, and the Home Library Service, to provide services to those unable to access our buildings.

The Service is an early adopter of new technologies including open source software solutions, embracing innovation to improve customer experiences and financial efficiency.

The library service is a key resource for our community, providing access to books, learning opportunities, cultural activity, and information. The buildings are important meeting spaces which offer a welcoming, neutral environment and host a range of events and opportunities for the whole community.

Halton Libraries' offer

It is free to join and use Halton Libraries

- **Books**

Halton Libraries have over 136,000 books in stock with collections for both children and adults. There is a huge variety of topics ranging from astrology to zoo keeping with titles available in a number of formats including audiobooks. Library users can take out 20 books at a time.

- **E-books and e-audiobooks**

Halton Libraries' users have access to over 40,000 e-book and e-audiobook titles via Borrowbox including the latest fiction and non-fiction bestsellers. Library users can loan 6 e-books and 6 e-audiobooks at a time.

- **Dual language and dyslexia friendly collections**

Halton Libraries have a selection of books which are suitable for users with dyslexia and other conditions. There are also a wide range of dual language books covering languages such as Polish, Ukrainian, Farsi and Spanish.

- **Digital newspapers and magazines**

There are over 27,000 digital newspapers and magazines available on the libraries' Press Reader site. The site is free to access and content can be translated into over 250 languages.

- **PCs and printing**

There are more than 40 public use PCs across the four Halton Libraries. These are free to use and there are also printing and photocopying facilities available.

- **Local history**

The local history collections at Halton Lea Library and Widnes Library contain a wide range of materials covering the history of Runcorn, Widnes and the surrounding areas. There is also a collection of local history photographs covering events in and around the Halton Borough dating from the 19th century. Library users also have free access to Cheshire Record Office and Archives.

- **Meeting room hire**

There are 7 meeting rooms at Halton Lea Library that can be hired by both corporate and private groups with additional rooms for hire in Runcorn Library. There is also display and exhibition space for hire at both Halton Lea Library and Widnes Library for local individuals and community groups.

- **Rhyme time and Saturday sessions**

Rhyme Time sessions for pre-school children take place all year round across each library location on a weekly basis. Stories and songs are enjoyed and provide a fun and enjoyable introduction to books, reading and libraries for young children.

- **Library clubs**

There are a number of free clubs which are run by Halton Libraries on a regular basis which include:

Good Yarn group

Lego club

Halton memories

Reading Friends phone group

Science club

Brilliant Builds

You can do I.T.

- **Games and jigsaws**

There is a wide range of both adult and junior games and jigsaws, which are free to use and are available during library opening hours.

- **Community Library Service**

Halton Libraries provides a valuable service to the community. This includes lending collections of books to care homes and sheltered housing, delivering memory boxes to care homes and giving talks and information to community groups and organisations. We are also working in partnership with other organisations to provide specific books and services to all parts of the community.

- **Home Library Service**

This service ensures that people who cannot get to the library for reasons such as mobility, illness and caring responsibilities, are still able to access books, delivered to their home once a month.

Key facts about Halton Libraries 2022



4 libraries serving a population of 128,500



351,317

Visits to Halton's libraries



2,297

Adults and children attended 68 class visits



15,552

E-book downloads



16,585

e-audio downloads



199,050

Books loaned



4,784

Children and parents attended Rhyme Time sessions

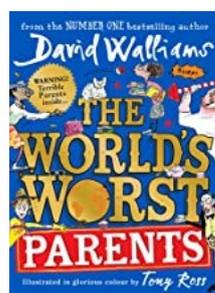
Most popular adults and children's books



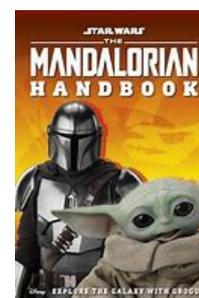
Highest loaning adult fiction book



Highest loaning adult non-fiction book



Highest loaning children's fiction book



Highest loaning children's non-fiction book

UNIVERSAL OFFERS

National Context

The National Universal Library Offer Framework -

www.librariesconnected.org.uk/page/universal-library-offers has been developed by Libraries Connected to represent core services which our customers and stakeholders see as being integral to a 21st century public library service.



The Universal Offers are delivered in Halton and are tailored to meet local needs.

Halton Libraries' Vision

An energetic library service, inspiring learning, embracing change and contributing to a thriving, diverse Halton

How will we deliver our vision?

1. Energetic library service

Maximise the potential of the space within library buildings:
Extend the junior areas and move the teenage sections to more prominent positions in Halton Lea and Widnes Libraries.

- Refresh the layout of Halton's libraries to improve customer service, interaction and accessibility.

Expand our offer to school aged children across the borough:

- Engage with primary schools to increase the membership for reception class intake.
- Increase the class visit offer and develop a new booking system for class visits.

Improve, strengthen and ensure consistency of customer service:

- Extend the corporate personal development for Halton Libraries' staff.

Improve the links with internal and external partners.

Expand our Home Library Service offer:

- Increase our customer base to reach more people within the borough

Improve information provision by introducing information hubs in all Halton Libraries.

2. Inspire learning

Introduce IT help sessions in all libraries and other community settings.

Expand the number of rhyme time sessions and extend the offer to specific groups.

Develop our partnerships with the local secondary schools through promotion and activities.

3. Embracing change

Maintain connections with Runcorn Old Town during the transition of Runcorn Library to the Brindley.

Extend the community library service:

- Introduce pop-up library services in community centres.
- Develop partnerships with local health services.

Implement Hublets at Halton Lea Library and introduce Wi-Fi printing in all Halton Libraries.

Expand our social media offer to reach more members of the community.

4. Contributing to a thriving, diverse Halton

Expand the opportunities to work with other agencies across Halton:

- Continue to develop our partnerships with business resources services.
- Expand the partnerships that offer onsite services to users.
- Further develop partnerships across the Halton community.

Develop the local history collection by promoting the archives service at the Cheshire Record Office and digitising the local history photograph collection.

Expand Halton Libraries' support to asylum seekers and refugee residents within the borough.

Explore financial efficiencies.

Investigate new income streams to increase library revenue.

Implement the winter campaign every winter from 2023 to 2028.

Home Library Service customer comments.....

"It has been brilliant during lockdown, Covid and various self-isolation for operations. I have never been missed - organisation is great those that are delivering are smiling and courteous. A brilliant service. Thank you."

"I look forward to the next date every time. Sometimes it can't come quick enough as I have read all my books and eagerly look forward to the Tuesday delivery. Congratulations to all staff and the drivers who always have a smile" 10/10 .

"Superb service, even throughout lockdown, It's made such a difference to know library books would still be delivered. I find it excellent!" 10/10.

"10/10 scores. The selection of books is excellent. Nothing is too much trouble for the staff."

"To all Outreach staff, thanking you for a 1st Class service which is greatly appreciated."

"To you all for a lovely service this year - 2022".

"Your service and staff have been lifesavers for me over the last 2 years. Thank you all drivers and staff." 10/10.

"Delighted with the service it helps me enormously. Thank you"

"Really happy with the service and the book selections have been fabulous. Enjoying trying new authors. Thank you!"

Strategic plan

12 month strategic plan – 2023/2024

- Extend the junior areas and provision in Halton Lea and Widnes Libraries.
- Extend the Home Library Service provision.
- Increase the class visit offer and develop a new booking system.
- Improve information provision by introducing community information notice boards.
- Maintain a service provision with Runcorn Old Town during the transition of Runcorn Library to the new extension at the Brindley.
- Provide display and exhibition areas at Halton Lea Library and Widnes Library.
- Develop social media channels.
- Improve the IT access for customers, adopting greater use of virtual storage and user friendly search engines.
- Review the library service opening and closing times, to provide the customer with greater consistency, without a detriment to the quality of the service.

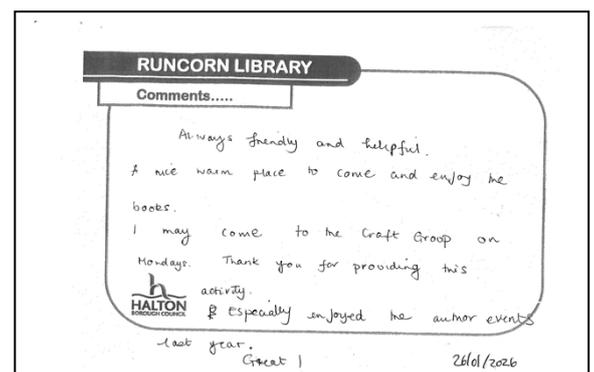
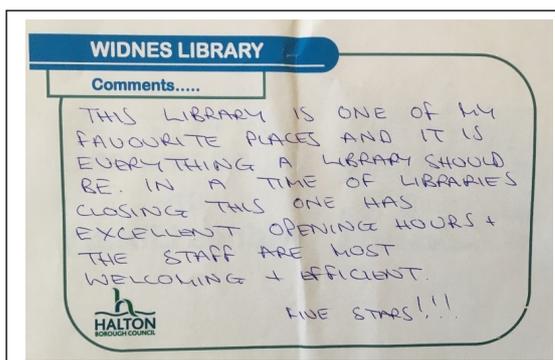
3 year strategic plan – 2023/2026

- Introduce IT help sessions in all libraries and community settings.
- Increase the number of rhyme time sessions and expand the rhyme time offer to specific groups.
- Develop our partnerships with the local secondary schools through promotion and activities.
- Continue to develop our partnerships with business resources services.
- Implement Hublets at Halton Lea Library and introduce Wi-Fi printing to all libraries.
- Investigate new income streams to increase library revenue.

5 year strategic plan – 2023/2028

- Refresh the layout of Halton’s libraries to improve customer service, interaction and accessibility.
- Engage with primary schools to increase membership for the reception class intake.
- Improve, strengthen and ensure the consistency of the libraries’ customer service policy.
- Extend corporate personal development for Halton Libraries’ staff.
- Improve the links with Halton Libraries’ internal and external partners.
- Extend the community library service with pop-up library services in the community centres and partnerships with local health services.
- Expand partnerships that offer onsite services to users.
- Further develop partnerships across the Halton community.
- Explore financial efficiencies within the library service.
- Expand the support to asylum seekers and refugee residents within the borough.
- Implement a winter campaign every winter from 2023/2028.

- Promote the archives service at Cheshire Record Office and develop the local history collection.
- Explore options for digitising the local history photograph collections within the service and make them accessible to all.



DITTON LIBRARY

Comments.....

My grandson Jacob loves lego club and also loves all the books ITS a warm friendly space and the staff are always welcoming.



HALTON LEA LIBRARY

Comments.....

My Children love Saturday stories! The staff are so lovely and have great relationships with the children.



We welcome your comments on Halton Lea Library

RUNCORN LIBRARY

Comments.....

We love the library, we come every thursday to lego club to build and get creative. The staff are always helpful, kind and engaging meaning we always feel welcomed in. It is easy to find and the selection of books is great my little boy always manages to find something he hasn't seen or read before! "



26/01/2023

HALTON LEA LIBRARY

Comments.....

Just want to say thank you for the wonderful home library service, my 80 year old Mother struggled with her eyesight & she was lost without her books but now she gets 10 'Talking' books delivered every month & it makes her day! brilliant service.



We welcome your comments on Halton Lea Library

WIDNES LIBRARY

Comments.....

Wonderful library the one place I really missed during lock down attentive and knowledgeable staff



WIDNES LIBRARY

Comments.....

I like widnes library because it has fun games and good books to read!



**Halton Lea Library, Halton Lea,
Runcorn, WA72PF**



Contact details

Tel: 0151 511 7744

Email:
haltonlea.library@halton.gov.uk

**Widnes Library, Victoria Square,
Widnes, WA8 7QY**



Contact details

Tel: 0151 907 8383

Email:
widnes.library@halton.gov.uk

**Runcorn Library, Granville Street,
Runcorn, WA7 1NE**



Contact details

Tel: 0151 511 7666

**Ditton Library, Queens Avenue,
Widnes, WA8 8HR**



Contact details

Tel: 0151 424 2459

REPORT TO: Employment, Learning and Skills, and
Community Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 19 June 2023

REPORTING OFFICER: Executive Director –
Environment and Regeneration

PORTFOLIO: Employment, Learning and Skills, and
Community

SUBJECT: The Brindley Theatre

WARD(S) Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To set out the financial position of the Brindley since its opening and request members delegate the full commercial programming of the Brindley Theatre to the Brindley Manager and Leisure Services Divisional Manager.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

i) The report is taken to Executive Board for approval.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The Brindley Theatre opened in 2004 and operated with a large subsidy from the Council, in excess of £1 million per annum.

3.2 By 2011 the Brindley was generating income of £477,333 with expenditure of £1,042,751 and therefore still running at a £565,418 deficit. This deficit had to be reduced if the venue was to continue to operate.

3.3 In order to reduce the deficit a commercial management review was embarked upon for the Venue in 2012, with the former Chief Executive and the former Strategic Director Enterprise, Community and Resources. Instrumental to this review was an overhaul of the venues programming to a more varied and commercial programme, to be more inclusive and engaging for the local community and to provide something for everyone. Please follow the link to current programme <https://thebrindley.org.uk/> brochures will be provided at the meeting.

3.4 Pre Covid (2017/18) the Brindley was generating income of £1,263,659 with expenditure of £1,263,051 with a £393 deficit. The

change in fortunes was directly as a result of the varied programme.

3.5 Through the Covid period (2019 – 2022) the venue continued to break even due to Government Grants from the Culture Recovery Fund.

3.6 In 2024 a large extension will commence at the venue as part of the Town Deal Fund - Reconnecting Runcorn programme. This will make the venue an aspirational cultural hub for the borough. The refurbishment will naturally require additional revenue in order to function, as the extension adds a considerable amount of new floor space. It is important therefore, to look at ways to protect the reputation that has been built through the Brindley brand as a sub-regional theatre and increase income opportunities, wherever possible.

3.7 The commercial programming of the venue is critical to maximising income and to maintain the venues break even position in a highly competitive and challenging marketplace. The Brindley Manager and Leisure Services Divisional Manager would resume full responsibility for the programming and when the need arises, consult the Operational Director for Community and Greenspace and the Executive Director for Environment and Regeneration.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The Brindley supports all the Council's priorities.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 As outlined in the report, the figures speak for themselves. Operating commercial programming has been critical to reducing the subsidy requirement from the Council. If the programming is restricted, then new subsidy will be required.

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

The current programme provides ample opportunity for children and young people not only to come and watch performances, but to be involved in performances, which can improve confidence and raise self-esteem. We have over 90 Dance Schools who regularly use the Brindley for rehearsals and shows. In addition the Halton Primary Arts Network schools regularly use the performance space.

6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

The Brindley supports the Council's priorities from an employment

learning and skills perspective as it is a key employer in the town with over one hundred staff, largely made up of casual staff with flexible hours.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

The varied programme includes comedians and laughter is known to reduce the level of stress hormones, it also increases the level of health-enhancing hormones, like endorphins. Laughter increases the number of antibody-producing cells we have working for us and enhances the effectiveness. The venue is also a social gathering place and can help reduce loneliness. The venue also has free to use spaces; the gallery and café area, with free Wi-Fi and as it becomes home to the Runcorn Old Town Library and a larger café/restaurant area the opportunities for local people will increase and include free PC access.

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

Advice has been taken from Cheshire Police Counter Terrorism Unit for the existing Brindley and the extension, to promote a safe venue for customers and staff.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

The theatre is an important selling point when attracting inward investors and businesses to the borough and is the key flagship project within the Reconnecting Runcorn programme.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 The most significant risk to the Brindley theatre is that to its reputation and long term financial sustainability. We acknowledge that it is a Council run venue and it needs to compete with commercial run venues in the sub region. The Brindley's reputation can be damaged by cancelling acts and uninviting performers. The agents and promoters of shows are in a contact with each other. We want to avoid putting doubt into any agents mind that their show could be next. If the Brindley gets tarnished as censorship venue, we will lose performers and by losing performers, we lose income.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 The Brindley Theatre is open and fully accessible. As part of the new extensions a Changing Places facility will be installed which will not only serve the Brindley, the wider town centre.

9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no direct climate change implications as part of this report. However, the Brindley extension project is including significant climate supporting measures. These were reported to Executive Board on 20 April 2023 (EXB111).

10.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

10.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO: Employment, Learning & Skills and Community Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 19th June 2023

REPORTING OFFICER: Executive Director for Environment and Regeneration

PORTFOLIO: Employment, Learning and Skills and Community

SUBJECT: Progress on Pathways to Teaching Programme (co-ordinated on behalf of the LCRCA)

WARD(S) Borough Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide members with an overview of the Pathways to Teaching Project, co-ordinated by HBC's Employment, Learning and Skills Division on behalf of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, including achievements to date, income and expenditure.
- 1.2 To provide members with the opportunity to raise any questions with regards to the Pathways to Teaching Project

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the report be noted.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Background Information

- 3.1.1 The 6 local authority Adult Learning Services in the Liverpool City Region are experiencing a shortage of good quality adult learning tutors coming forward to deliver in their services. Often, tutor vacancies can be advertised 3 or 4 times before suitable candidates are recruited and the services have had to rely on using expensive agency workers instead.
- 3.1.2 Following discussions between the 6 local authorities and the Combined Authority (CA), a pilot programme was proposed, whereby the respective adult learning services would effectively 'grow their own' tutor base. The CA agreed to grant fund the programme from its Adult Education 'Test & Learn' Budget and Halton Adult Learning Service agreed to act as the co-ordinator for the programme – named as Pathways to Teaching from September 2022. The funding would enable the local authorities to 'test out' this innovative approach to adult learning tutor recruitment.

3.2 The Pathways to Teaching Programme

- 3.2.1 The programme allows participants to obtain a variety of qualifications, including qualifications in British Values, Safeguarding and Equality and Diversity, along with the completion of the Level 3 Award in Education and Training
- 3.2.2 It is an inclusive programme, aimed at supporting residents across the Liverpool City Region in taking their first steps towards a teaching career within the Adult Education Sector, by:
- Removing potential barriers for prospective tutors to undertake training, such as funding and childcare;
 - Providing the opportunity to experience the Adult Education sphere from a tutor's perspective through placements in their own Local Authority;
 - Supporting learners with the achievement of qualifications.
- 3.2.3 The four key principles of the programme are that participants will:
- Develop the knowledge and understanding of Education and Training from an Adult Learning perspective through the achievement of the Level 3 Award in Education and Training;
 - Understand the meaning of the wider curriculum (Safeguarding, British Values, Equality and Diversity), and develop the skills to effectively bed these into an effective Scheme of Work;
 - Experience working in an Adult Learning setting, and are supported by a mentor within that setting; and
 - potentially progress into a higher level teaching qualification (Level 5 or 7), and ultimately gain employment as a tutor within the Local Authority where they have completed their placement (these are undertaken within the participants' chosen authority and will be in the learners' chosen subject area where this is reasonably practicable).
- 3.2.4 The programme had an ambition to train 70 Pathways to Teaching participants (September 2022 – July 2023) across the Liverpool City Region. It supports those who do not traditionally meet the eligibility requirements for a funded Level 3 programme to study at this level as a means to help address the shortage of Adult Education tutors the local authorities are experiencing.
- 3.2.5 It is expected that all learners on programme will have completed their portfolio of qualifications by July 2023 and that they will have developed a sufficient understanding of teaching and learning within the Adult Learning environment to make sound judgements about their progression and next steps.

- 3.2.6 The respective Adult Learning manager in each council sources appropriate teaching placements within their service. Placements involve participants working alongside an experienced adult learning tutor, who provides support and advice in order for the trainees to develop a real understanding of the requirements of the role. At the end of the programme, the Pathways learners must demonstrate their acquired teaching skills and knowledge through an assessed mini teach.

3.3 Performance

3.3.1 Contract delivery commenced September 2022. Performance is comprehensively managed and monitored through a range of internal and external measures, agreed between Halton Borough Council (as the co-ordinator) and the CA. In addition, monthly Pathways to Teaching meetings take place.

3.3.2 There are 38 Pathways to Teaching participants on programme across the Liverpool City Region, broken down as follows:

- Halton (4)
- Knowsley (16)
- Liverpool (9)
- St Helens (0)
- Sefton (3)
- Wirral (6)

Learners across the project are undertaking placements in a variety of subject areas including Skills for Life, ESOL, Wellbeing and music.

3.4 Income and Expenditure

3.4.1 Pathways to Teaching is funded by the LCR CA's Adult Education 'Test & Learn' Budget. Halton Borough Council, as co-ordinator, acts as the budget holder for the project and co-ordinates the funding for the other local authorities.

3.4.2 The agreed budget also includes funding to support learners experiencing hardship (e.g. provision of equipment, resources, childcare) and for the progression qualification, which would be delivered by the respective Further Education College in the local boroughs.

3.4.3 Income and expenditure is closely monitored through a combination of internal and external mechanisms, to ensure that contracts are delivered efficiently, with each local authority having to submit monthly data and financial returns to Halton.

3.5 Key Successes

- 3.5.1 5 out of the 6 Local Authorities within the Liverpool City Region engaged with the project and were successful in recruiting learners on to the programme.
- 3.5.2 Learners in all authorities are progressing well. All are currently on placement in their respective adult learning service and all are expected to achieve their portfolio of qualifications by their planned end date of July 2023.

3.6 Key issues

- 3.6.1 Ironically, the Pathways to Teaching programme has itself been impacted by the recruitment and retention of sufficiently trained and experienced adult learning tutors to deliver the project across the City Region. The impact of this has been mitigated by the respective local adult learning services, however this has led to additional pressures elsewhere.

3.5 Concluding comments

- 3.6.1 The councils delivering the project have worked hard to ensure that the learners on programme have had a positive, stable experience despite ongoing staffing and capacity issues. Strategic planning for Year 2 of the project has commenced as a collaborative effort between all of the authorities, however the continuation of the project is depending on renewal of funding from the CA.
- 3.6.2 Each local adult learning service is supporting its Pathways learners on considering their next steps towards a teaching career in adult learning. It is hoped that a number of the L3 Pathways learners will progress onto the Level 5 or Level 7 qualification, whilst at the same time as working in their respective adult learning service as a newly qualified tutor.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 No specific changes to policy have been made.

All participants adhere to the policies and procedures within their designated local authority.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Externally funded contracts are closely monitored to ensure sufficient income is being generated to cover the full delivery costs of provision.

HBC internal audit conduct annual audits on externally funded provision across the Employment, Learning and Skills Division.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children & Young People in Halton

By supporting those with additional barriers to traditional teacher training to enrol onto the programme, this has a positive impact on the prospective career opportunities for residents within the borough, which has a direct benefit to the children and young people within those families.

6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Participants on the programme develop new knowledge, skills and experience in teaching in an Adult Education Service. Within the Halton delivery, the nature of the programme embodies the divisional values of 'Empowerment, Opportunity and Resilience' and allows participants first-hand experience of being in a professional workplace.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

A number of participants are completing their placements in Wellbeing and Personal Development courses, and aim to teach within this subject in their career. This will have an impact on the breadth of Wellbeing and Personal Development courses offered by Halton's Adult Learning service and will serve to support residents in the borough with their Wellbeing, Development and Mental Health.

6.4 A Safer Halton

None

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 The management of the Pathways to Teaching has been meticulous and close monitoring both internally and externally to ensure any risks identified are carefully mitigated, with clear action plans in place to address any underperformance, quality and compliance factors.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 None.

9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 The Pathways to Teaching Programme aims to recruit local people to work within the Borough, reducing the requirement to travel to work. The learners also develop an understanding of how to promote Climate Change awareness and sustainability within a Scheme of Work.

10.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

10.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO: Employment, Learning and Skills
Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 19 June 2023

REPORTING OFFICER: Executive Director - Environment and
Regeneration

SUBJECT: Performance Management Reports for
Quarter 3 of 2022/23

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider, and raise, any questions or points of clarification, in respect of performance management for the third quarter period to 31st December 2022.
- 1.2 Key priorities for development or improvement in 2022 - 23 were agreed by Members for the various functional areas reporting to the Board as detailed below:
- Enterprise, Employment and Skills
 - Community and Environment

The report details progress against objectives and milestones, and performance targets and provides information relating to key developments and emerging issues that have arisen during the period.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the Policy and Performance Board

- 1) Receive the third quarter performance management report;**
- 2) Consider the progress and performance information and raise any questions or points for clarification; and**
- 3) Highlight any areas of interest and/or concern where further information is to be reported at a future meeting of the Board.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Departmental objectives provide a clear statement on what services are planning to achieve and to show how they contribute to the Council's strategic priorities. Such information is central to the Council's performance management arrangements and the Policy and Performance Board has a key role in monitoring performance and strengthening accountability.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no policy implications associated with this report.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no other implications associated with this report.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Departmental service objectives and performance measures, both local and national are linked to the delivery of the Council's priorities. The identification of business critical objectives/ milestones and performance indicators will further support organisational improvement.

6.2 Although some objectives link specifically to one priority area, the nature of the cross - cutting activities being reported, means that to a greater or lesser extent a contribution is made to one or more of the Council priorities.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 At the time at which annual business plans are developed, Directorate Risk Registers are also refreshed and updated.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Not applicable.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Not applicable

10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTIONS 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

10.1 Not applicable

Employment, Learning, Skills and Community PPB – Priority Based Monitoring Report

Reporting

Period: 01st October to 31st December 2022

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of issues and progress against key service objectives/milestones and performance targets, during the third quarter of 2022 / 23 for service areas within the remit of the Employment, Learning, Skills and Community (ELSC) Policy and Performance Board.
- 1.2 Key priorities for development or improvement in 2022 - 23 were agreed by Members and included in Directorate Plans, for the various functional areas reporting to Employment, Learning, Skills and Community (ELSC) Policy & Performance Board i.e.
 - Employment, Learning and Skills
 - Library and Culture and Leisure Services
- 1.3 The emergence of the global COVID19 pandemic early in 2020 has had a significant and unavoidable impact upon Council services the full extent of which is yet to become known. The Council, along with key partner agencies, has prioritised its resources upon mitigating the serious risks to public health, the protection of vulnerable residents, and the social cohesion of the local community. In developing appropriate responses to emerging national and local priorities this situation is likely to remain the case for the foreseeable future.
- 1.4 The way in which traffic light symbols have been used to reflect progress to date is explained within Section 7 of this report.

2.0 Key Developments

- 2.1 There have been a number of developments during the period which include:-

2.2 Employment, Learning and Skills

- Extension was granted for the LCR Apprenticeship Support by Be More team to the end of Q3.

Community & Environment

2.3 Culture

The Brindley Theatre and Events

- The Brindley Theatre bookings diary continues to increase with 2023 and 2024 virtually full with bookings now being taken into 2025.
- Two new double entrance doors have been installed within the Café in order to facilitate the new temporary entrance for when the refurbishment works take place in 2023.
- This year's sponsored fireworks display was the best ever, set against the backdrop of the iconic Silver Jubilee Bridge. With an estimate of over 40,000 people viewing the fireworks across the borough. The Silver Jubilee Bridge was closed for the day and used at the launch site for the display.

- The Events Team could not have put on this year's event without the sponsorship and support of the below local companies:
- Marshall/CDP
- Langtree
- Beesley & Fildes
- Eddie Stobart
- DCBL
- Esken
- Tarmac
- Halton Housing

The Events Team in partnership with the Mayoral Office supported the local British Legions Remembrance Day Services at both Victoria Park and Runcorn Cenotaph. Both services were very well attended with the numbers now gathering increasing each year.

2.4

Community Centres

All our Community Centres are open to offer a safe and warm place for people to visit. Customers are made welcome and can be signposted to other organisation which may be able to help them.

The Centres are in need of new Chairs to replace the current ones we have, we have secured Area forum funding to help fund the new chairs.

Castlefields Community Centre

- Castlefields Community Centre held a Table Top Sale on 8th October, we had 17 tables booked in which helped local residents to clear their unwanted household items and the raise some funds to help with their Christmas purchases. Recycling is an approach we have been encouraging with our waste and recycling team who attend the Centres to promote the correct way to dispose of unwanted items and recyclable waste. We have also been involved in the re-cycling of coats where members of the public donated coats they no longer used at each Community Centre and they held events at the Centres week commencing 21st November.
- Roaming Planetarium Events were held in the Community Centres during half term week in October, teaching children and families about the Planets in the Solar System, this was a free event for Families. The Brownies and their leaders from Castlefields attended this event.
- The Centre held a Halloween Party for Children and their Families on 30th October, this was part funded by Halton Castle Area Forum, the event was well attended, Aladdins Cave Entertainments hosted the Party which was enjoyed by all the local residents which attended.
- We held two Christmas Parties Events in December, One for Adults and one for Children. Both partly funded by Halton Castle Area Forum. Entertainment was provided at each event and hot meal was provided for the Adult Party. Each event was fully booked. We used a small room off the Hall as a Grotto where children took it in turns to visit Father Christmas.
- We distributed Creativity Boxes which were donated to families in Halton by Split Perspectivz CIC. The boxes were jam-packed with mental health activities and methods, validated by Samaritans. They allowed children to follow the Boat of Hope campaign. They improve literacy. They are much needed at Christmas. They show families that somebody cares.
- Castlefields Community Centre have also been able to relocate a local Charity, Access to Support who work with vulnerable young adults in Halton with space after their office was flooded just before Christmas.
- We have had an increase in weekend bookings for private children's parties covering 8 out of 12 weekends and have also been able to offer Trinity Safe Space our main hall for their Project Events.

Grangeway Community Centre

- Halton Housing held a Halloween Party in October, this was a free event for Families. They had many stalls, a bouncy castle and games for children and they provided hot food and drink, this was very well attended by over 250 local residents.
- Cheshire Police used Grangeway Community Centre For Mischief Night, We Supplied the police with hot food and refreshments which was funded by Community Safety
- New training bookings started in October for people wanting to work on building sites, to gain their CSCS Card. This will help people to gain work in the building trade.
- Halton Housing held an advice day in November at Grangeway, it was very well attended by local residents, and they provided information stalls. The Health Bus providing Covid information was also present on the side carpark.
- We have a new booking Christmas Table Decorations and Wreath Making by a local Florist
- Runcorn Comets Fundraising Prize Bingo helped raise funds for their Group, with over 90 people attending.
- Pick a coat day was held in November at Grangeway, we had a fantastic turn out we gave out 250 coats on the day.
- The 6th Runcorn Beavers And Cub Scouts held their Christmas Bingo with prizes and gifts to help support The Scouts annual outings
- Halton Borough Council held a toy Sale people donated new toys and they were sold at the event with funds made going to Halton Food Banks.
- Sure start to Later Life held a Christmas Event, with entertainment Food and refreshments.
- Grangeway Forum in partnership Halton Borough Council held a Bingo we sold 120 tickets with plenty of prizes which were donated. Everyone received a hot drink and Mince Pie.
- In December Runcorn Comets held their Christmas party at the Centre with Games and plenty of food for people to eat
- Grangeway Community Centre held 2 Christmas Events One for the Children and one for Adults both with entertainment. The small office in reception was set out as a Grotto for the children to meet with Father Christmas, all children were given a small gift.
- Halton Lodge Pre School held their Christmas Party too in December and used the Grotto for the young children to visit Santa.

Ditton Community Centre

- Wonky Gardens held an open day in October where they opened the gardens up to the public and provided refreshments and information on a range of topics that was well attended. Wonky Gardens also donated a lovely planted Christmas Tree in the Centre and decorated it with traditional handmade decorations.
- We also had a new meditation group starting on Monday evenings in October.
- Halton Skies held a Halloween family event that was free to attend, with tombolo stalls and refreshments also they had pumpkin lantern making activity for the children. They also had a local dance school who provided a dance display for people's entertainment.
- The Community Centre held a Christmas party that was part funded by area forum that provided entertainment refreshments and food that was well attended and enjoyed by all
- Children's centre held a baby's 1st Christmas party where the children were entertained by doing crafts with the parents. They also had a breakfast with Santa where the children were given a present, each event was free.

Murdishaw Community Centre

- The Centre's family Hallowe'en party took place on 31st October. With all 75 tickets being sold well in advance we were sure of a good turnout, it was nice to see some familiar faces and some new after a three year gap (due to Covid restrictions) all thoroughly enjoying themselves. As in the past the Centre was extensively decorated for the Hallowe'en party (thanks to Centre staff members - Julie assisted by Gill) drawing many complimentary comments from centre users and partygoers alike. Area Forum Funding enabling tickets to be sold at a subsidised cost. Thanks to Rachel Prime (H.B.C.'s Community Development Officer) for supporting with the funding bid for this event and the Christmas event and for assisting on the night.
- "Pick a coat for free" day was held on Monday 21st November. This was the culmination of several weeks collecting donated coats as part of Halton & St. Helens VCA initiative to redistribute unwanted coats to those in need, throughout Halton, by holding such events in several Community Centres and at their base in Widnes.
- The Centre's Family Christmas party took place on Friday 16th December with all 75 tickets being sold two weeks beforehand. Area Forum Funding subsidised the event and as in previous years Aladdin's Cave provided the music & entertainment, with families having time to visit Santa in his Grotto, plus arts & crafts on offer too (Thanks to Rachel Prime for supervising the latter) with lots of happy faces during and after the party. We began putting up the Christmas decorations and tree at the end of November (Santa's Grotto was assembled just for the party). We received a lot of positive feedback from Centre users as to how festive and attractive they made the Centre look and feel (A big thank you to Julie ably assisted by Gill for their efforts decorating the Centre).

Upton Community Centre

- JM Excellence in Training has begun a block booking, Monday to Wednesday, except school holidays. The young people will be working towards a sport qualification and as well as English and Maths qualifications. This is continuing.
- Sure Start to later life have had their monthly event for Christmas, Upton CC provided the food for their event this time. Upton CC will continue to cater for event in 2023.
- Vibe have started to use the climbing wall now that the service on the wall has been completed. The ropes which needed to be replaced have been replaced. Vibe ran half term activities in the sports hall.
- Elite Coaching Solutions have used the sports hall for the half term holidays too.
- We collected coats for the Halton & St Helens VCA and had a great response. They also ran an event here for giving them away to the local community.

HEARTS held the annual panto here in December. This year it was Cinderella. Tickets were sold to the local Community and they also held a performance for the School Children. The Mayor attended on the final day.

2.5 Library Service

Resources

- The implementation of the new public VDI PC offer has started with the install of the new equipment at Ditton Library, in December 2022. The HBC IT team will roll out this offer to the other service points from mid-January 2023. The new equipment will provide library users with greater opportunities for searching and improve learning opportunities plus the new offer can be fixed remotely thereby avoiding long periods of down time.

Outreach

- New partnership with Halton Hospital – promotion of library service and ebooks. Bookstart packs supplied for children’s waiting rooms. Agreement with Tesco, Widnes for promotion of the service and Summer Reading Challenge in the foyer. Visited 2 Age UK groups and the Carers’ Centre Forum to promote relevant aspects of the service.
- Resulted in new joiners and new members of the Home Library Service. We continue to provide memory boxes for use by care homes. Recent evaluation of the scheme has confirmed that care homes are using them for the wellbeing of the residents
- Health- National Reading Well for teens collection of books launched, all available in every library. Promotion to schools and youth organisations. World Mental Health Day - Nightstop CIC had a stand and workshops at Halton Lea and Widnes Libraries.

Halton Lea & Runcorn Libraries

- ‘Stay Well, Stay Warm’ coffee mornings have been consistently popular since their launch in October and plan to run through to Feb 23- attendance figures for Runcorn and Halton Lea from Oct- Dec 22 totalled 145 people.
- Requests for a regular Scrabble club were received from Runcorn library coffee morning participants, which we piloted and has been gaining steady popularity with attendance from a handful of people each week.
- October hosted 2 x one off events in Runcorn and Halton Lea- an art exhibition and local history evening talk- bringing in over 65 people to attend these events
- ‘Saturday Squad’ launched for seasonal festive activities- all events sold out (free to participate) with all tickets being allocated for each weekly session- participation numbers for Runcorn and Halton Lea total- 145 people
- An additional live music Christmas family Rhyme Time was put on in December in Halton Lea with record attendance for similar sessions of 40 children and 40 adults for this 1 x 60 minute session
- This year was the first in several that Halton Library Service remained open in between Christmas and New Year and Halton Lea welcomed over 150 people through the doors on the first day open (Wednesday 28th December 22)

Widnes & Ditton Libraries

- We were pleased to welcome BBC Radio 4 to our December Stay Warm, Stay Well event at Widnes Library. Their article for the Moneybox programme focussed on libraries as warm, welcoming spaces and included interviews with Energy Projects Plus and Age UK which both ran outreach sessions at the event.
- Mako and Daresbury SciTech have been working in partnership since October to deliver Code Clubs aimed at 10-17 year olds at Widnes Library. The monthly events, which will continue to March 2023, have proven to be popular and have all sold out to date.
- Lego Club at Ditton library has continued to grow since its launch in September 2022, with 118 children attending during Quarter 3.
- During October half term library staff delivered a range of Autumn/Halloween themed crafts and activities at both Widnes and Ditton libraries. The free events all sold out on Eventbrite, though limited drop in places were also available.

3.0 Emerging Issues

3.1 A number of emerging issues have been identified during the period that will impact upon the work of services including:-

Employment, Learning & Skills

3.2 Employment, Learning & Skills

- If successful, recruitment of specialist staff for the Home Office employability programme will take place in Q4.
- Preparations for an Ofsted inspection will continue in Q4 with an adult learning inspection being imminent. A real focus will be on safeguarding of young people accessing the service in particular.
- The Division will cease the delivery of the LCR Apprenticeship Support by Be More project on the 31st January 2023 and the Team will no longer be employed in the Division.

Community & Environment

3.3 Culture Services

None detailed

3.5 Library Service

None detailed

4.0 High Priority Equality Actions

4.1 Equality issues continue to form a routine element of the Council's business planning and operational decision making processes. Additionally the Council must have evidence to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which came into force in April 2011.

4.2 The Councils latest annual progress report in relation to the achievement of its equality objectives is published on the Council website and is available via:

<http://www4.halton.gov.uk/Pages/councildemocracy/Equality-and-Diversity.aspx>

5.0 Performance Overview

The following information provides a synopsis of progress for both milestones and performance indicators across the key business areas that have been identified by the Directorate.

Employment, Learning & Skills

Key Objectives / milestones

Ref	Objective
EEP 01	Employment Learning and skills

Milestone	Progress Q3	Supporting Commentary
To manage and sustain employment support programmes Work Programme by March 2023		A number of employment programmes are in operation with some being funded beyond March 2023.
To deliver a Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Graduation Ceremony by September 2022		The Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Graduation ceremony took place as planned, at Anfield stadium
To develop, in partnership with the CA/LCR CAs, a Pathways to Teaching in Adult Learning route way by September 2022		PTT developed as planned, with the other LAs in the LCR. Recruitment for tutors and learners commenced in Autumn Term (September to December), with delivery across all programmes planned to commence in January 2023

Appendix 2: Progress Against Performance Indicators

Ref	Description	Actual 2021 / 22	Target 2022 / 23	Quarter 3 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
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EEP LI 08	Number of Enrolments (Adult Learning).	698	2500	494			The service is still working hard to redress the impact of Covid. Recruitment delays impacted the ability of the service to run its full curriculum in Q3, along with key members remaining on long term sick. This had a notable impact on capacity
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Ref	Description	Actual 2021/22	Target 2022/23	Quarter 3 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
EEP LI 09	Number of People supported into work (HPiJ).	333	750	130			130 customers were supported into employment across all employment programmes in Q3. Cumulative number of customers supported into work 450 via HPIJ
EEP LI 10	Percentage of learners achieving accreditation .	15%	20%	18%			There has been the introduction of a L3 Education and Training qualification. As well as further Distance Learning qualifications which have both supported in increasing the number of learners achieving a qualification. Additionally, the greater focus on timeliness has improved achievements in Maths and English.
EEP LI 11	Total number of job starts on DWP Work and Health and JETS programmes (Ingeus).	142	257	58			58 customers were supported into employment on Work and Health and JETS programme in Q3. Cumulative number of customers supported into work 215
EEP LI 12	Total number of job starts on DWP Restart programme (G4S). (New)	N/A	265	45			45 customers were supported into employment on Restart programme in Q2. Cumulative number of customers supported into work 160.
EEP LI 13	Number of Businesses Supported.	1091	500	31			As Covid business support has ended, efforts to increase business engagements are being made.

Ref	Description	Actual 2021/22	Target 2022/23	Quarter 3 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
EEP LI 14	Number of individuals supported into paid work placements (ILMs)	47	100	7			7 ILM's commenced in Q3. The number of young people aged 16-29yrs of age wanting to apply for ILM's has reduced. There was also an issue of double funding for customers on other programmes preventing them accessing ILM's.
EEP LI 15	Number of adult learners who feel prepared for choosing the next steps (e.g. into employment, another course, college/university etc.)	90%	100%	96%			Although an upward trend, the target for this remains as 100% as all learner should feel ready for next steps on completion. The service aims to provide wider ranging information and impartial Careers and progression advice through partnership with NCS and running events such as Careers Fairs and Open Evenings in Spring / Summer terms
EEP LI 16	Number of adult learners who have progressed onto another course	49%	52%	18%			Due to recruitment and long term sickness absence there has been limited delivery of non-accredited engagement courses
EEP LI 17	Deliver supported internships	N/A	10%	9%		N / A	There are currently 9 interns on programme, undertaking accredited qualifications in Employability . Learners also supported in developing maths and English skills.

Ref	Description	Actual 2021/22	Target 2022/23	Quarter 3 Position	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
EEP LI 18	% Increase coverage in top 7 disadvantaged wards <i>(New)</i>	N/A	10%	15%	U	N / A	Difficulty obtaining clear ward data. The service will be using Power BI moving forwards to report more clearly on LSO areas and develop a marketing plan to increase engagement from deprived or in need areas

Community Services

Ref	Objective
CE 02	Develop a confident, energetic library service. Create a team that deliver pioneering projects with communities, from vibrant spaces & online. Establish the library service as an organisation embracing change, leading learning, - and contributing to a thriving Halton.

Milestone	Progress Q3	Supporting Commentary
Create a digital offer that utilises up to date technology and hardware options to ensure residents are able to access information, communication, & learning opportunities that support personal growth and individual ambition. March 2022		The implementation of the new public VDI PC equipment will offer the latest technology for accessing information and improving learning opportunities
Working in partnership, deliver an ambitious cultural programme that builds on the legacy of the Borough of Culture festival season, securing external funding to maximise impact, value & potential. March 2022		A Cultural Strategy is being produced.

Key Objectives / milestones

Key Performance Indicators

Ref	Description	Actual 2021/22	Target 2022/23	Quarter 3	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
CE LI 07	Number of active users (physical & digital resources) of the library service during the last 12 months.	1,799,950	1,250,00	505,500			Number of active users (physical & digital resources) of the library service (October to December 2022) = 505,500
CE LI 08	Number of physical and virtual visits to libraries (annual total)	1,485,023	987,000	532,188			Number of physical and virtual visits to libraries (October to December 2022) = 532,188
CE LI 09	Increase in percentage of the population taking part in sport and physical activity at least twice in the last month (KPI 1 from Active Lives survey)	50.1%	53%				To be updated at year end
CE LI 10	Percentage of people physically inactive (KPI 2 from Active Lives survey)	38.9%	30%-				To be updated at year end

6.0 Financial Statements

ECONOMY ENTERPRISE & PROPERTY DEPARTMENT

Revenue Operational Budget as at 31 December 2022

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Employee Related Expenditure	4,898	4,210	4,103	107	143
Pay Award	195	0	0	0	0
Repairs & Maintenance	2,347	1,631	1,681	(50)	(67)
Premises	92	90	90	0	0
Energy & Water Costs	895	500	594	(94)	(126)
NNDR	549	549	633	(84)	(84)
Rents	177	141	141	0	0
Economic Regeneration Activities	37	13	0	13	17
Security	486	329	345	(16)	(22)
Supplies & Services	618	434	430	4	5
Supplies & Services - Grant	1,284	574	574	0	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	130	103	103	0	0
Capital Finance	30	30	30	0	0
Transfer to Reserves	190	187	187	0	0
Total Expenditure	11,928	8,791	8,911	(120)	(134)
Income					
Fees & Charges Income	-773	-386	-386	0	0
Rent - Commercial Properties	-837	-517	-431	(86)	(115)
Rent - Investment Properties	-53	-43	-43	0	0
Rent - Markets	-796	-604	-583	(21)	(21)
Government Grant	-803	-803	-803	0	0
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-1,206	-726	-726	0	0
Schools SLA Income	-381	-381	-362	(19)	(19)
Recharges to Capital	-243	-71	-71	0	0
Transfer from Reserves	-1,883	-1,451	-1,576	125	125
Total Income	-6,975	-4,982	-4,981	(1)	(30)
Net Operational Expenditure	4,953	3,809	3,930	(121)	(164)
Recharges					
Premises Support	1,474	1,106	1,106	0	0
Transport Support	27	20	20	0	0
Central Support	2,082	1,562	1,562	0	0
Asset Rental Support	4	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	-6,258	-4,693	-4,693	0	0
Net Total Recharges	-2,671	-2,005	-2,005	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	2,282	1,804	1,925	(121)	(164)

Comments on the above figures

The Department recognises the significant financial challenges they face and will continue to face into the near future, particularly given the elevated levels of inflation for commodities including fuel, energy, materials, and increased wage demands. Budget holders actively manage their budgets and work closely with the Financial Management team to try and achieve a balanced budget.

To date the Department is reporting net spend to be over the approved budget by £0.121m. The longer term forecast through to the end of the year estimates net spend will be above the annual budget by £0.164m.

Across the Investment & Development Division several posts are currently vacant due to a restructure that has taken place. Temporary resources are in place where it has been possible to find the appropriate skill set required. It is envisaged that the vacancies will not be filled this financial year. The delay in recruitment of staff has improved the employee budget position this quarter. The 2022/23 pay award was agreed in October.

The impact of increased energy and fuel costs continue to be monitored during the year and it is anticipated that current budget provision will not be sufficient to meet rising costs and will therefore be met from Council reserves. Latest forecasts show a 207% increase in Gas Costs and 64% electricity costs.

The Asset Management Service is currently forecasting a budget pressure of £0.285m which includes reduced rental income. This figure is inclusive of empty property business rates costs of £0.084m, repairs and maintenance costs of £0.042m to ensure buildings are in a satisfactory state for future tenants.

Work is ongoing to fill vacant properties. There will be a monetary impact of any delays.

The savings put forward to provide additional office space for external agencies at Rutland House will not be achieved this budget year. This budget pressure will continue into financial year 2023/24. It is important that any future savings put forward can be delivered and will not create an added budget pressure.

Due to adverse trading conditions in the retail sector which have been worsened by inflation and increased utilities costs, the department is projecting to under achieve on market rental income targets this budget year. During the last few months, the occupancy rate has dropped to 92%. This may be linked to the introduction of customers having to pay for parking outside the market.

The School Cleaning Service Level Agreement (SLA) is not covering its costs this budget year due to the need to employ agency staff to cover sickness and leave and the pay award. A review of SLA charges has been undertaken ahead of the next budget year.

ECONOMY ENTERPRISE & PROPERTY DEPARTMENT**Capital Projects as of 31 December 2022**

	2022-23 Capital Allocation £'000	Allocation to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Total Allocation Remaining £'000
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure				
3MG	164	18	18	146
Murdishaw Redevelopment	31	2	2	29
Equality Act Improvement Works	200	53	53	147
Widnes Market Refurbishment	6	6	6	0
Broseley House	21	7	7	14
Solar Farm Extension	11	0	0	11
Foundry Lane Residential Area	2,117	2,075	2,075	42
Kingsway Learning Centre Improved Facilities	36	0	0	36
Halton Lea TCF	388	353	353	35
Property Improvements	213	169	169	44
Astmoor Regeneration	14	14	14	0
Woodend - Former Unit 10 Catalyst Trade Park	500	79	79	421
Runcorn Station Building Development	110	60	60	50
St Paul Mews	500	500	515	(15)
Runcorn Town Centre Redevelopment	2,000	1,346	1,346	654
Total	6,311	4,682	4,697	1,614

Comments

3MG - Planning approval was granted for HBC Field and the Council will complete the transaction on 28th Feb 2023. Discussions have taken place with LCR colleagues in relation to the Tax Site status of 3MG and Culina have been referred to LCRs tax specialist for enquiries about a Custom site.

Murdishaw - The partnership development continues, supporting onward in leasing the former boxing club and establishing a CIC. Alongside this, work is ongoing to develop the outdoor space at Murdishaw Community Centre.

Equality Act Budget- There are several access type schemes using the equality act budget this year so it is anticipated the budget will be fully spent at year end.

Widnes Market Refurbishment - All Capital works have now been completed and all retentions paid

Broseley House - All works are complete on site, the only outstanding payment is the retention monies.

Solar Farm Extension - It has now been operational for 2 years. No major issues have been identified. The system is performing in line with expectations in terms of energy produced and income.

Foundry Lane – Project Works now well underway. Remediation Works to Phase 1 complete, with housing construction to commence mid 2023. Statutory planning documentation relating to Phase 2 currently being drawn up, due for submission in 2022/23 Q4.

Kingsway Learning Centre Improvement Works – Majority of the refurbishment works completed; redecoration works to the meeting rooms to be carried out.

Halton Town Centre Fund - This LCR funded programme is now complete

Property Improvements- There are a number of projects against this code including reroofing the fitness suite at the Stadium, lift replacement at Kingsway Learning Centre, and reroofing 73 High Street. There will also likely be some roofing works done at the Municipal Building.

Astmoor Regeneration –Langtree formally appointed as JV Partner with project design/approval underway. Full Development Agreement currently being drawn up – delayed due to HM Land Registry errors needing to be addressed. Full phased Work Programme agreed in draft.

Woodend Unit 10 Catalyst Trade Park- Refurbishment works have commenced on site due for completion prior to 31st March 2023. Likely expenditure circa £550,000

Runcorn Station Building Development - Architectural images of the station have been produced. Network Rail's Asset Manager has endorsed the options report, which is a key stage to progress the project. Project sponsor has been liaising with their Capital Delivery Team to discuss moving the project to the next stage and the requirements / resources needed from Network Rail to do that.

St Paul Mews- No further spend is likely until the last remaining tenant vacates the property then progress with the demolition work will continue.

COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT**Revenue Budget as at 31 December 2022**

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	16,052	11,949	11,148	801	1,038
Premises	2,543	1,799	1,838	(39)	(100)
Supplies & Services	1,398	1,263	1,314	(51)	(99)
Hired & Contracted Services	890	121	243	(122)	(136)
Book Fund	146	125	114	11	14
Food Provisions	404	306	264	42	57
School Meals Food	1,872	1,568	1,406	162	216
Miscellaneous Transport Costs	115	86	81	5	6
Other Agency Costs	156	125	119	6	(69)
Other Expenditure	0	2	6	(4)	(6)
Waste Disposal Contracts	6,538	5,207	5,207	0	500
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	67	50	49	1	42
Grant to Norton Priory	172	173	174	(1)	(1)
Rolling Projects	0	5	20	(15)	(20)
Capital Financing	0	4	4	0	0
Total Expenditure	30,353	22,783	21,987	796	1,442
Income					
Sales Income	-1,309	-1,064	-924	(140)	(187)
School Meals Sales	-4,957	-3,530	-3,260	(270)	(380)
Fees & Charges Income	-5,546	-4,544	-4,501	(43)	(57)
Rental Income	-205	-157	-131	(26)	(35)
Government Grant Income	-359	-404	-404	0	45
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-597	-245	-242	(3)	(4)
Catering Fees	-88	-77	-55	(22)	(29)
Internal Fees Income	-247	-180	-100	(80)	(106)
Capital Salaries	-173	-120	-51	(69)	(93)
Transfers From Reserves	-747	-512	-512	0	0
Total Income	-14,228	-10,833	-10,180	(653)	(846)
Net Operational Expenditure	16,125	11,950	11,807	143	596
Recharges					
Premises Support	1,496	1,122	1,122	0	0
Transport	2,324	1,632	1,819	(187)	(250)
Central Support	4,449	3,337	3,337	0	0
Asset Rental Support	146	0	0	0	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-511	-383	-383	0	0
Net Total Recharges	7,904	5,708	5,895	(187)	(250)
Net Departmental Expenditure	24,029	17,658	17,702	(44)	346

Comments on the above figures

The net Department spend is £0.044m over the approved budget at the end of Quarter 3. The forecast outturn is likely to show an improvement on this and is estimated at £0.346m under the approved budget.

Net employee spend is below the budget to date by £0.801m, due to the number of vacancies within the department resulting from delays and difficulty in recruitment. This reflects vacancies within the school meals, leisure and open spaces services. Number of full time equivalent staff in the service is 425.

Premises costs are £0.039m over budget at the end of Quarter 3 with the forecast outturn estimated to be in the region of £0.100m over the approved budget. Costs for utilities across all sites are unclear for the final four months of the year given the increased cost of electricity and gas. Cost and usage will continue to be reviewed on a monthly basis and action taken to minimise where possible.

Spend on Supplies and Services is currently £0.051m over budget and spend on Hired Services is £0.122m over budget. This includes crematorium spend for the decommissioning of the temporary cremator plus equipment costs, including £8k/month for container hire.

The department has now received final invoices relating to 2021/22 waste disposal contracts. The indication is these costs are much lower than was forecast in finalising the 2021/22 accounts. The difference in actual cost to forecast is considered to be in the region of £0.500m but work is on-going to gain assurance over the final billed amount.

Charges for 2022/23 waste disposal contracts are calculated based on the average cost per tonne in the previous year. Further work will be undertaken in estimating costs for the full year to ensure accuracy of final estimated amounts.

Fees & Charges income is £0.043m under budget at the end of Quarter 3 and is not expected to hit budgeted targets. The cancellation of certain events, such as the Vintage Rally means that the associated income will not be realised. Shortfalls in income in the Leisure Centres and the Stadium plus a reduction in room hire at Community Centres and Libraries have also contributed under achieving income objectives.

Transport recharges are expected to be higher than budgeted due to fuel and other cost increases. This has resulted in an overspend against budget of £0.187m at the end of Quarter 3 with an estimated outturn overspend for 2022/23 of £0.250m.

Capital Projects as at 31 December 2022

Project Title	2022/23 Capital Allocation £'000	Allocation to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Total Allocation Remaining £'000
Stadium Minor Works	37	10	9	28
Halton Leisure Centre	3,296	1,200	1,359	1,937
Brookvale Pitch Refurbishment	70	38	71	-1
Stadium decarbonisation scheme	0	0	117	-117
Open Spaces Schemes	450	157	157	293
Children's Playground Equipment	80	5	3	77
Upton Improvements	13	0	0	13
Crow Wood Park Play Area	39	25	27	12
Landfill Tax Credit Schemes	340	0	0	340
Runcorn Town Park	256	150	164	92
Widnes Crematorium, Replacement Cremator	200	200	242	-42
Spike Island / Wigg Island	60	5	1	59
Litter Bins	20	0	0	20
Totals	4,861	1,790	2,150	2,711

Comments on the above figures**Halton (Moor Lane) Leisure Centre**

The estimated cost of the new leisure centre has increased significantly due to the current levels of inflation, scarcity of materials etc. The Leisure Centre contract start date is 09/01/23 for a 108 week build. Spend to date of £2.25m includes all works associated with the PCSDA and CPO etc. Anticipated spend of a further £760k bringing the total spend to £3m by 31st March 2023.

Brookvale Pitch Refurbishment

The scheme is now complete. An invoice is due February for £32,605 for the practical completion. There is a slight overspend due to additional fence panel/gate request works.

Stadium Decarbonisation Scheme

Grant-funded project to reduce the DCBL Stadium's carbon footprint. This involved replacing the gas boilers with air source heat pumps and installing LED lighting and additional installation. The scheme was completed in March 2022 with retentions due April 2023.

Open Spaces

This covers spending on a variety of externally funded projects, including Arley Drive/Halton Housing Trust and Fairfield History projects. Schemes on this code are progressing, although slightly behind the expenditure profile due to capacity issues.

Children's Playground Equipment

This is an ongoing project which includes spend on improvements within the Borough's playgrounds. A contract has been let for the majority of this spend and it is expected to have most of the budget spent this year.

Crow Wood Park

The main contract for the new park building has ended. A small amount of work to the building is required plus additional landscape contract to complete the paths - this is ongoing with some work from Property services and Open Spaces team to complete.

Landfill Tax Credits Schemes

Currently used to support improvements for a rolling programme of existing playgrounds/open space schemes across the Borough. There are no projects currently identified and minimal spend if any against this is anticipated in 2022/23.

Runcorn Town Park

Project to renew park infrastructure. Project is ongoing with 2 contractors on site expect to meet expenditure by end of financial year. Possibly some carry forward will be needed to complete work in season and for contingency payments.

Widnes Crematorium replacement Cremator

Contract works on the new cremator are complete. Some of this overspend is as a result of the original budget of £200k being based on the quote from a company that later had to drop out of the process because they failed to meet the financial solvency requirements HBC needed. The company who could meet our financial requirements quote was an additional £31k. A further £10k overspend is as a result of repairs required to unforeseen damage to the original building slab under the old cremator when it was removed.

Wigg/Spike Island Recovery Works

The programme is slightly behind due to staff capacity issues. Waiting for a consultancy agreement to be put in place so the scheme can progress using external help.

7.0 Application of Symbols

Symbols are used in the following manner:

Progress Symbols

<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Performance Indicator</u>
Green 	Indicates that the <u>objective is on course to be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.	<i>Indicates that the annual target is <u>on course to be achieved</u>.</i>
Amber 	Indicates that it is <u>uncertain or too early to say at this stage</u> whether the milestone/objective will be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.	<i>Indicates that it is <u>uncertain or too early to say at this stage</u> whether the annual target is on course to be achieved</i>
Red 	Indicates that it is <u>highly likely or certain</u> that the objective will not be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.	<i>Indicates that the target <u>will not be achieved</u> unless there is an intervention or remedial action taken.</i>

Direction of Travel Indicator

Green 	Indicates that performance is better as compared to the same period last year.
Amber 	Indicates that performance is the same as compared to the same period last year.
Red 	Indicates that performance is worse as compared to the same period last year.
N / A 	Indicates that the measure cannot be compared to the same period last year.